



EMC News

December 6, 2001

Volume 8, No. 11

Chair's Report



As another year draws to a close, we'll use the December meeting to reflect on what we've done and where we want to go. Thank you to those who won't be continuing on the EMC next year. Your contributions and insights have been invaluable. To those who'll be back in 2002, thank you and keep up the good work.

Tompkins County has named Edward Marx as its new Planning Commissioner. He is currently Oswego County's Director of Planning. Among other things, he helped spearhead a cooperative venture with DEC, The Nature Conservancy, local municipalities and residents to acquire, develop and manage a county park, beach and natural area on the shore of Lake Ontario. I am looking forward to working with him. He plans to attend our January meeting, where he'll have a chance to hear about us and we can listen to his ideas.

Submitted by Susan Brock

Coordinator's Report

For those of you who did not attend the last EMC meeting, I regret to inform you that I will no longer be serving as the EMC Coordinator. Recently, my position was moved to Administration where I will focus on capital and other county-initiated projects. I plan to continue working with the EMC on the environmental review of county projects, and through my role with the state association.

When I first started working for Tompkins County, the BOR was revisiting the structure and organization of the EMC. It was a turbulent time for many. However, the result of the process was many new members, including municipal representatives, increased communication with the BOR and local governments. During the past 2^{1/2} years, I have had the unique opportunity to watch the EMC grow and broaden its influence in county government. The value of an advisory board is often illustrated by how the governing body relies upon the group for guidance or assistance, and takes action on proposed recommendations. To measure the success of the group by this standard, I believe the EMC has evolved to have a unique relationship of mutual respect; in part, because the group is composed of members who are both knowledgeable and thoughtful. I will miss working so closely with all of you -- it has been a true pleasure. Thank you for a great experience and I will look forward to working with the EMC in my new capacity.

Submitted by Mikel Shakarjian

Environmental Review Committee

Tompkins County Oil and Gas Leasing Requests: The Committee again discussed at length how to advise the BOR regarding oil and gas leasing proposals made for Tompkins County properties. The committee has finished its recommendations and will submit them to the EMC for approval at its next meeting.

Price Anderson Bill Renewal: Committee members completed drafting a resolution opposing the renewal of this bill by Congress and will submit it to the EMC for approval at its next meeting.

Elmira Road Shopping Center: site plan review: This plan now has a "Positive Declaration" and another DEIS will be prepared. The committee has re-submitted comments it made previously regarding this project.

Six Point Traffic Plan, Negative Declaration: Herb Engman moved that the committee recommend to Ithaca Common Council that they adopt a Positive Declaration of environmental impact for the plan. The motion was approved unanimously. Barbara Ebert will draft the recommendation and forward it.

Submitted by Steve Uzmann

Don't Forget!
December 12, 2001 EMC Meeting

Pesticide Committee

We met on November 28 with the county Planning and Health and Human Services Committees to discuss the Pesticide Neighbor Notification Law. Our position continues to be that although the new law is flawed and has met with intense resistance and lawsuits from the commercial turfgrass industry, the State of New York has determined that we all have a right to know when your neighbor's lawn has been sprayed with pesticides. While Tompkins County uses considerably less lawn pesticides than the more populated counties downstate, opting in to this notification law will serve as an effective vehicle to educate the public on strategies to reduce our cosmetic applications of unnecessary carcinogens into our environment. We will continue to provide input to the county BOR on this issue.

According to data collected by the USGS, Cayuga Lake leads the fingerlakes in Atrazine concentration. The most

widely used pesticide in the world, as well as in Tompkins County, atrazine has recently been reclassified by the EPA from a "possible" to a "likely" human carcinogen. In addition, its classification as an endocrine disrupter can alter the functioning of human hormonal systems. While the current levels of atrazine in the lake fall below the established Federal Health Advisory Levels (HAL) for a healthy adult male, they are well above the HAL for children under 10, and by inference, pregnant women. Atrazine is second only to DDT in ability to disrupt estrogen function. HAL's do not include the health effects of the breakdown metabolites of atrazine, nor synergistic effects with other pesticides. Given this new information on the dangers atrazine poses to children and infants, and the costs water suppliers would face providing safe drinking water, the EPA should ban this pesticide, which is already banned in eight European countries. Everyone in the Cayuga Lake watershed should seriously consider this issue, as our deep lake takes 10 years to renew itself. Water treatment at Bolton point does not remove atrazine.

Submitted by Steve Nicholson

Announcements

Energy Saving Tip of the Month

Home Energy Saver Website:

<http://www.homeenergysaver.lbl.gov/>

The Home Energy Saver is an Internet-based tool for calculating energy use in residential buildings to help consumers identify the best ways to save energy in their homes. The project is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as part of the national ENERGY STAR Program for improving energy efficiency in homes.

The Home Energy Saver quickly computes a home's energy use on-line based on methods developed at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. By changing one or more features of the modeled home, users can estimate how much energy and money can be saved and how much pollution prevented by implementing energy-efficiency improvements. All end uses (heating, cooling, major appliances, lighting, and miscellaneous uses) are included.

Users can begin the process by simply entering their zip code, and in turn receive instant initial estimates. By providing more information about the home the user will receive increasingly customized results along with energy-saving upgrade recommendations.

By entering the number and approximate age of their major appliances, users can estimate their energy consumption, based on historic sales-weighted efficiency data. A very detailed module is also included to estimate energy consumption and savings opportunities for lighting and dozens of miscellaneous gas and electric appliances, with default values based on data compiled over the years by LBNL researchers.

This is a very easy to use yet detailed site. Users can quickly compare their home's energy bill to the average Ithaca

household, which spends \$2493 annually while producing 22769 pounds of carbon dioxide. Also shown is how to reduce this bill and its associated pollution by 44%.

Submitted by Steve Nicholson

Purchase of Development Rights Study **Upcoming Public Meetings**

County Board of Representatives

December 18, 2001

County Courthouse, Tioga Street

No Reports Submitted

Executive Committee Report

Water Resources Committee Report

Education Committee Report